

May 15, 2023

167 Main Street #242

Memphis, TN 38103

Jacqueline Vaccaro

Loudon, TN 37774

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MAY 22 2023

Wendy R Oliver, Clerk
U.S. District Court
W.D. OF TN, Memphis

Dear Honorable Judge Parker,

I write this letter in reference to SB003. It has come to my attention that you may decide to block it. I pray, sir, that you choose otherwise. I am a retired junior high school English teacher of 32 years from New York State, and retired on my birthday in March of 2021. In the span of my career, I have had the privilege of educating over 7000 adolescents. Judge Parker, as a person who has spent much of her adult life enmeshed in the lives of those emerging into adulthood, I have learned so much about them; what makes them anxious, what upsets them, what inspires them, what brings them peace and hope.

In that time, I also learned something very interesting: teenagers get a bad rap! Most adults don't speak well of them, or they utter phrases of consternation against them. I tried to reason out why and came to understand that it's because teenagers are a bit reckless; they don't always mean to be, it's just that they are working out the kinks of becoming an adult, and the choices they make are usually based on bad advice, negative influences, peer pressure, and a lack of moral and responsible role models. Although the process of emotional and mental and physical growth is bumpy, sometimes gritty, often confusing, it is also very fragile. Puberty is a challenge; however, it is the most unifying challenge of the entire human race regardless of race, status, culture, religion, geographic location. Every one must go through it, for God intended it that way for a reason. One of those reasons is that puberty gives the adult community an opportunity to guide and protect those who can't do it themselves. Puberty calls adults to rise up and guide the minds and souls of the young. That job is a sacred one; and although it can be daunting and frustrating and exhausting, at the end of the day, it is a privilege and blessing.

Sir, in my time with young adults, I have listened to the grief of many who were harmed by ill-intentioned adults; so many were sexually abused. None of them enjoyed it. They really didn't. And in every situation, it was a relative or someone close to the family who forced that child, merging into adulthood, into a horrible nightmare. I have not met one child who enjoyed being raped. I have not met one child who loved having their transformation into adulthood exploited and rushed. I have not met one child who enjoyed becoming a mother at the age of 12. No, Sir. All of those young adults expressed pain, grief, shame, confusion, anger, indignation, and

rightfully so. How ironic that the adults who label teens as being reckless and dangerous are the very ones exhibiting those traits themselves.

Honorable Judge Parker, is it really necessary for these young children to be subjected to drag queen performances? Do children really want to be mentally, physically, and spiritually assaulted by men in women's clothing moving provocatively in front of them? The irony of this assault runs deep for me because by virtue of the fact that I am an educator, I am also a mandated reporter. These shows, and the powerful organizations funding them, provide countless reasons for reporting them to Child Protective Services. Many times, I have posed this question to the drag queen community: Why is it so necessary for you to perform in front of children? And I have not yet received an answer. Not even one. If ever there was a call to make for the protection of these children, this one is the mother load.

Honorable Judge Parker, one of the most important things for a teenager is to fit in; to be popular; to not stand out. And that concern is normal given their tender age. I would like to believe though, that as we mature into rational adulthood and experience the rights of passage that the journey of adulthood provides, we become wise and learn the powerful differences between fitting in versus standing out. Although fitting in may feel safe, it is usually a sign of fear and weakness of character which lends itself to personal failure; a deep failure of morality. The actions we take for the sake of fitting in often create irreversible damage to others and ultimately to ourselves. Daily, I reenforced this message to my students. Standing out is scary too; however, in the case of protecting children from grooming and predators, you would not be standing alone. There are more of us who desire to protect than those who desire to prey.

Honorable Parker, I pray that the abundance of letters you receive from adults who don't enjoy assaulting a child's mind, then body, then soul is all the evidence you need to convince you to not block SB003.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline

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Wendy R Oliver, Clerk
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Honorable Judge Thomas Parker
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Memphis, TN 38103

38103-182167

